

YALE
MEDICAL LIBRARY



HISTORICAL
LIBRARY



Ex Libris J. Smeeton
SERIOUS REASONS

FOR

UNIFORMLY OBJECTING

TO THE

PRACTICE OF VACCINATION:

IN ANSWER

TO THE REPORT OF

THE JENNERIAN SOCIETY,

&c.



BY JOHN BIRCH,

SURGEON EXTRAORDINARY TO THE PRINCE OF WALES,

AND

SURGEON TO ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

NATURAM EXPELLAS FURCA,
TAMEN USQUE RECURRIT.

LONDON:

Printed by J. Smeeton, 148, St. Martin's Lane,

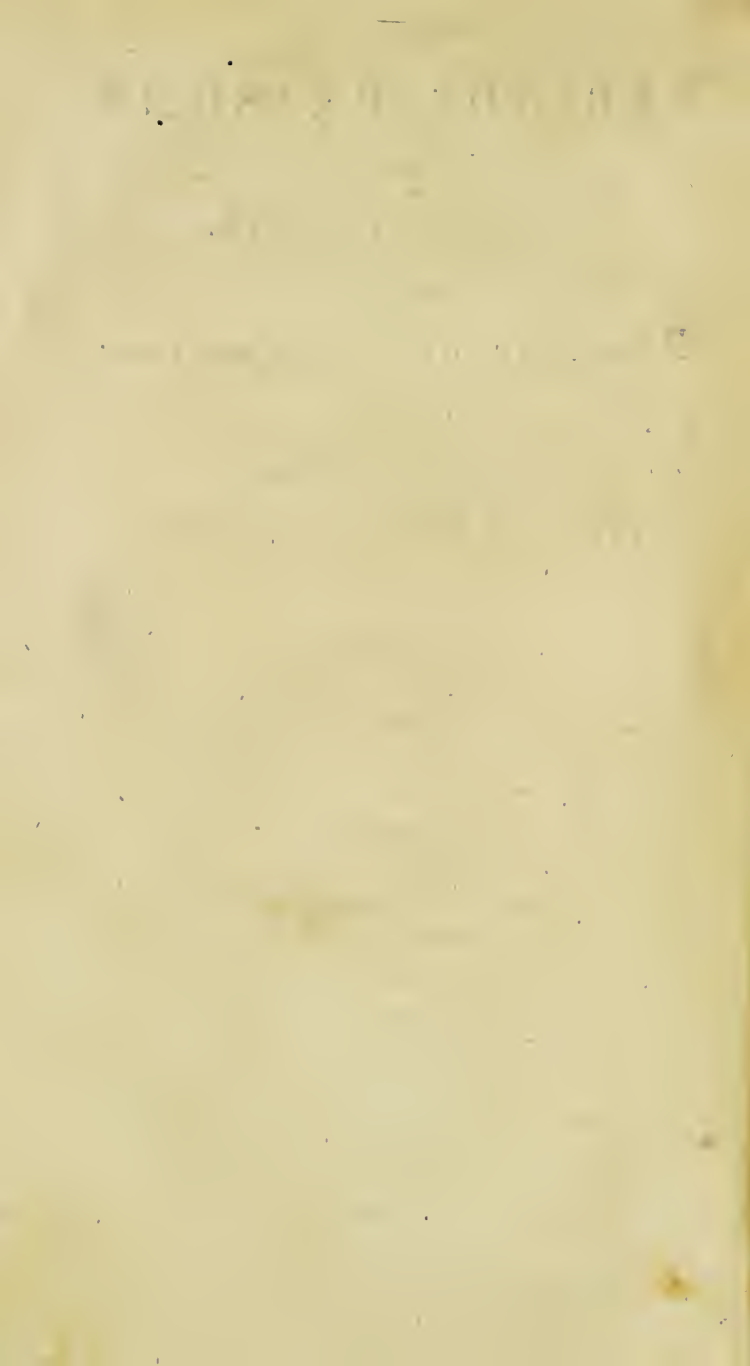
FOR

HARRIS, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD;

SOLD BY

CALLOW, CROWN COURT; HIGHLEY, FLEET STREET;
HATCHARD, 190, PICCADILLY; RYAN, 353, OXFORD STREET,
AND
LOWNDES, BEDFORD STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1806.



TO THE
Honorable BARON DIMSDALE,

AS-BEST QUALIFIED TO DECIDE
ON THE MERIT OF THE EXPERIMENT

AND THE
TRUTH OF THE ARGUMENT;

T H E S E R E A S O N S ,

ARE

WITH DUE RESPECT,

INSCRIBED

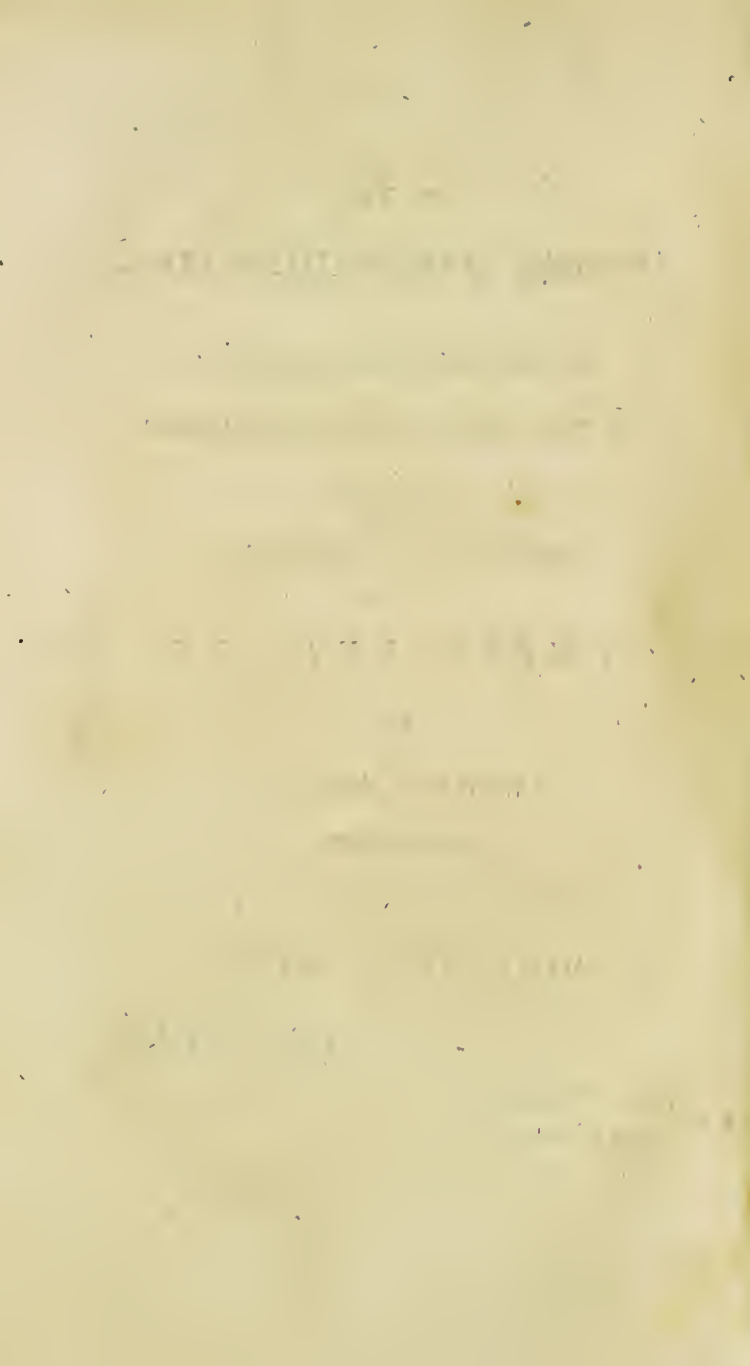
BY

HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

SPRING GARDENS,

JUNE, 1806.



SERIOUS REASONS
FOR
UNIFORMLY OPPOSING
THE
PRACTICE OF VACCINATION,
&c.

THAT the enthusiasm with which Vaccination was at first adopted should subside, and that the Public should express regret that what ought to have been admitted as an experiment only, had been adopted as practice, are circumstances which it was easy to foresee, would sooner or later occur. In all investigations, and in all enquiries, Truth must ultimately prevail. In the present it would have long since prevailed, had not the patrons of Vaccination had recourse to such expedients to interest the passions, and mislead the judgment of the Public, as could hardly fail of obtaining for their system, a temporary kind of success. But the triumph of prejudice, and novelty will always be transient. The

empire of Truth alone is permanent. I entertain no doubt therefore but that we shall soon see what yet remains of popular opinion favourable to the cause of Vaccination, *vanish into thin air*; and that the speculatists in physic, like the speculatists in politics, will be brought back to the old standard of sober reason, and experience.

Impressed with this conviction I should have patiently awaited the event, and contenting myself with having declared my opinion publicly, should have forborne taking any part in the controversy, had it not been for considerations of humanity, which supersede every other.

Wherever I go I find the minds of parents distracted with doubt, and labouring under gloomy apprehensions. They tell me that the fluctuations of medical opinion concerning the origin, and nature of the Vaccine disease fills them with alarm; and they say they are in the most fearful state of suspense, dreading lest what they were persuaded to do in the hopes of saving their children from one disease, may not prove the means of plunging

them into another at once novel, and malignant.

Much as I lament their being in so distressing a state of suspense, I cannot wonder at it. For while on the one hand they hear of repeated instances of the failure of Vaccination; on the other they find, that reports from the Jennerian Committee, subscribed by names, some of the highest respectability, are widely circulated, full of seeming arguments and assertions in favour of the experiment; assertions which they have not the means of contradicting; and arguments just plausible enough to excite doubt, but not sufficiently strong to operate conviction. If under these circumstances I can adduce what may enable persons of this description to form a fixed opinion on the merits of Vaccination, and thus rescue them from the misery of uncertainty, I shall consider myself as having discharged one of the most important duties I owe Society.

Such is the primary motive for my writing the following pages: a secondary motive is, that, as the Jennerian Committee have sent me their Report of last January for my sig-

nature, I may candidly tell them why I have hitherto forborne to subscribe it, and why I sha'll never subscribe it. To this report therefore, and to a very ingenious pamphlet written by Mr. James Moore, certainly the ablest and most candid writer that has appeared in support of Vaccination, I shall confine as much as possible my remarks. The bitterness of invective, and the unhandsome sneers, with which the partisans of Vaccination have assailed their opponents, as they offer no argument, merit no reply.

The Report opens by stating, that the Medical Council appointed twenty-five members of the Jennerian Society as a Committee to enquire into the truth of various cases that had occurred, exciting prejudices against Vaccine Inoculation; and it is the result of their enquiries, that is submitted to the Public.

Now, without calling in question the judgment of the Medical Council, I must observe that it became them, in a matter of such importance, to inform us who these twenty-five persons were. For as the Society is very numerous, comprehending many of both sexes, and of all professions, the Committee might have been formed of persons, not altogether

competent to the task: since evidently, besides what may be called a knowledge of Vaccination, it was necessary there should be likewise a thorough knowledge of medicine. In other words the Public ought to have been assured that the Committee was composed of regular, and experienced physicians and surgeons, before they could be, in reason expected to assent to its decisions: instead of which we have a Committee made up of persons whose very names we are unacquainted with. I confess this circumstance, in my mind throws as much suspicion over the Jennerian Reports, as it would over a verdict in a common court of law to be told, that it was the verdict of a jury, no one member of which the defendant was permitted to challenge; whose names, conditions and character were studiously concealed; and who had never so much as appeared in court during the trial.

This however is not the only circumstance that makes me regard with an eye of suspicion the Reports of the Committee. The several articles of that Report are couched either in a style so dogmatizing, that the Committee seem more intent on imposing a law, than on producing conviction; or else

in terms so vague, and ambiguous, that the reader must be at a loss to obtain any fixed and definitive idea of the subject. The former of these faults I will pass over, as it may be attributed to the force of the conviction entertained by the Committee of the justness of their positions: but the latter as an honest man I cannot, since it has a tendency to mislead, rather than direct the judgment of the Public. Surely the Committee are aware that nothing is more suspicious than the use of equivocal expressions; and that there is nothing the candid disputant more scrupulously avoids. By means of these, confessions of error, extorted by truth, may be made no confessions at all: may be so worded as to produce no effect, and yet carry with them the appearance of candour, and concession. I will instance the truth of this remark in the Ninth and Tenth Article of the Jennerian Report.

The Committee being at last compelled to acknowledge that cases have been brought before them, in which it was incontestibly proved that persons having passed through the Cow Pox in a regular way, had afterwards received the Small Pox; contrive to destroy

the effect of the concession, by the following ambiguous expressions.

“ It is admitted that *a few* cases have been brought before them, of persons who had *apparently* passed through the Cow Pox in a regular way, &c.”

Now, (not to remark on the use of the indefinite word *few*, which may mean five or six, or five or six dozen, for ought we know, when it was so obviously important, and easy to have specified the precise number,) I must observe, that as the passage stands worded, it might seem as if the Committee having seen all the cases of failure in Vaccination that could be produced, found only a *few* they could admit to be genuine. How many cases they did see, I will not take upon me to conjecture: I suspect they did not wish to see many, for if they had, they might have seen, or have had unquestionable testimony of many hundred cases of failure, of which not a *few*, but far the greater part, if not the whole, would have been found conclusive against them.

But it is said, “ *apparently* passed through the Cow Pox.” What! only apparently?

If the Committee had not been satisfied the patients had *really* passed through the Cow Pox, they neither would, or ought to have admitted the failure of what they call a *few* cases. Why then is the word “apparently” introduced? I can imagine no other cause, than that this equivocal word might serve to qualify the confession of the Committee, and thus make it *appear* less conclusive than it really is.

But this is not all. The Committee proceed to say, that “cases supported by evidence “equally strong were brought before them “of persons having had the Small Pox a “second time by natural infection.”

Will the Committee pardon me if I remark that they are here guilty of reasoning very unfairly, to say no worse of it. In the one instance they argue from cases *brought before them*: in the other, from the *evidence of cases* brought before them. That is, when a case makes against them they admit no proof but the evidence of their own senses: when it is favourable to their cause, they admit it on the evidence of others. In fair reasoning, in both instances, a similar degree of proof ought to

be required. If cases on the testimony of others are admitted to prove the failure of Inoculation, cases on the testimony of others, should be admitted to prove the failure of Vaccination ; and then the Committee will be compelled to state that not merely a few cases, but that many hundred cases of failure have occurred : for many hundred cases are already before the Public of persons who have had the Small Pox after Vaccination, attested by the evidence, not of hasty observers and unscientific Operators, but of able and experienced Practitioners.

But this is not the only instance of unfair reasoning I am to complain of on the part of the Jennerian Committee.

They say, “ *In many of the cases* in which “ Small Pox has occurred after Inoculation ! ” *Many of the cases !* This expression I presume is to contrast with the *few cases of failure* admitted in Vaccination, and the Reader is left to infer that cases of failure in Inoculation are of frequent recurrence ; than which inference nothing can be more unfounded, more contrary to truth.

For in the first place, if we could grant all the cases that have been adduced on any thing like proof, to attest the recurrence of Small Pox after Inoculation, these, during a period of more than half a century, would not amount to more than three.

But in the second place, the fact itself has been uniformly denied by the best and most able Practitioners. They have always maintained that the Small Pox never has been known to recur after Inoculation; and however the contrary may be assumed by those who have systems of their own to advance, it is considered as one of the invariable Laws of Nature, that, (and if an exception could be proved, I should be justified in saying, *exceptio probat regulam*) a Patient can suffer the Small Pox but once.

I might quote in support of my opinion, that of the celebrated Baron Dimsdale, Dr. Archer, and many others; but it will be of greater authority in the present case to quote the opinion of Mr. J. Moore, the candid supporter of Vaccination, who admits in his Pamphlet, that Small Pox does not recur after Inoculation.

I have dwelt longer on these two Articles, than I probably shall on any of the succeeding, that I might put the Reader on his guard against the false conclusions into which he might otherwise be led, by the ambiguous manner in which the Committee write. And I shall dismiss this part of the subject by saying, that the same inaccuracy of expression, (whether accidental or studied, I presume not to decide) that reigns in this particular instance, reigns throughout the whole of the Report. So that the inference, drawn of old from the artful conduct of a single individual to the craftiness of a whole race, may be applied to the arguments of the Committee,

Crimine ab uno,
Disce omnes —————

Let us now follow the Committee to other particulars.—

They proceed to assert, that most of the cases they examined were mistated, or unfounded.

If they allude to the cases mentioned by Mr. Rogers in his Pamphlet entitled, “ Examination of the Evidence before the

“ House of Commons,” I pledge my word as a man, and my character as a professional person, to prove them all. Nay, further, I pledge myself if more cases are necessary, to produce many, alas! too many more, of Variolous Infection caught after regular Vaccination. But of the abundant number of cases laid before the Public, the majority cannot be either mistated, or unfounded; and if so, the cause of the Committee falls at once to the ground. For granting, (what never can be granted) that only one third of the cases adduced were substantiated, there would remain above one hundred and fifty instances of acknowledged failure: and surely these would be sufficient to convince any dispassionate person, that Vaccination is not, and cannot be a preservative against the Small Pox. What shall we say then, when in addition to this it is proved, that several patients have died of the immediate consequences resulting from the puncture of Vaccination; while on the other hand it never was, or could be with any truth asserted, that similar fatal consequences had in a single instance resulted from the puncture of Small Pox Inoculation? The inoculated patient, if he dies, (which is not one in three hundred in the general irregular mode of proceeding, and not

one in a thousand among observant practitioners,) dies of Small Pox, and of nothing but Small Pox; the appearance of the punctured arm is uniformly the same; and the treatment of it is one of those judicious points in Surgery, peculiar to Baron Dimsdale's method of cure.

The Committee, to exonerate the Society from the censures of repeated failures, state; that many persons not acquainted with the Disease, have undertaken to vaccinate, and that much of the consequent ill success has resulted from this circumstance. But they forget that the principal evidence they themselves adduced to support their cause, before the House of Commons was that of a Clergyman; they forget too that several of the Fanatical Preachers among the Sectaries, have been ever since the most zealous and approved champions of their system, both in their preachings, and practice; together with some Ladies, who have received their instructions from Dr. Jenner himself. So that the same set of people who are disowned, when it is convenient to disown them, are brought forward as good evidence, when it suits the cause. Is not this another instance of that

mala fides, which throws a just suspicion over the cause altogether?

But laying aside these equivocal practitioners, among the ignorant, the Committee, I presume, do not mean to class Mr. Wachsell, Apothecary to the Small Pox Hospital; or Mr. Ring, the Accoucheur; and yet from the patients vaccinated by these two persons, I would bring instances, if the House of Commons were again to demand it of me, of more failures, more deaths, and more diseases than have occurred in the practice of any other two persons who have come within my knowledge.

It is further asserted by the Committee, that when the Small Pox occurs after Vaccination, it is more mild than usual, and loses some of its characteristic marks; but in many cases in which it recurs after Inoculation, or the natural disease, it is particularly severe, sometimes fatal.

This article appears to me extremely objectionable and disingenuous. For, not to mention the improper use of the words, *many cases* of the recurrence of the Small Pox; the Com-

mittee here argue from an assumption of their own, which as fair, and honest reasoners, as men having no other object than the investigation of truth, they never ought to have done. Their assertion is, that though Small Pox does sometimes recur after Vaccination, this circumstance is not to create any alarm; for when it does return, it is so mild that even its existence is doubtful; whereas in *many cases* in which it recurs after Inoculation, it is particularly severe and often fatal. Thus arbitrarily to assume the fact, that Small Pox does occur after Inoculation, a fact denied by the Advocates of Vaccination themselves, and then to build on it an argument in favor of their system, is in my mind a mode of proceeding bordering on criminality. For if the Committee were addressing their Reports to Medical Men only, no great mischief would ensue, since the fallacy would be immediately detected, and any argument built upon it would of course fall to the ground. But as the Committee are addressing their Report to Parents, who being ignorant of the history of Diseases, are compelled to rely implicitly on those who profess to tell them the truth, they ought to have remembered it was a solemn duty in their statement of the

case, to have “turned neither to the right hand, nor to the left.” They ought to have told their readers, that the recurrence of Small Pox after Inoculation was a fact, supported by such slender evidence, so contrary to the laws of nature, and so generally discredited, that when it does occur, as is supposed a second time, this is considered as a proof that the disorder which the patient had in the first instance, was not the Small Pox. That the Committee therefore omitting all this should boldly beg the question, and argue from that as proved, which is one of the points in dispute, is such an instance of unfair reasoning as perhaps it would be difficult to parallel.

The assertion of the Committee in the XXth article, that the * Diseases which are said to originate from Cow Pox are scrophulous, and cutaneous, and similar to those which arise

* The words of the Committee are—“Complaints represented as the effects of Vaccine Inoculation, when in fact they originated from other causes.” This is another instance of the bold manner in which the Committee assert, to get rid of difficulties. What proof is advanced that the complaints did originate in other causes? None but the *ipse dixit* of the writer.

from Inoculation, is according to my observation quite incorrect. Many of the eruptions are perfectly novel. As far as my experience and my information go, I will venture to affirm they are eruptions of a nature unknown before the introduction of Vaccination; and peculiar to those who have been Vaccinated. Such was the case of the child in Jermyn Street: such was that of a child near Guildford vaccinated by Dr. Elliot; and of many more whose names, from respect to the parents, I forbear to mention.

As for Latchfield's child, that case differed as much in every essential characteristic from Scrophula as possible. The first appearance, the encrease, the colour of the suppurating part, and the indelible dark Eschar, all marked a new, and undescribed disease. Scrophula is a useful name on various occasions. But its symptoms are well known and defined; they cannot long be confounded with those of any other disease: and when a little experience shall have made the distinction clear, then, if I mistake not, many a babe whose parents transmitted to it the fibres of health, and vigour, shall lament the dire effects of unsatisfactory experiment; while those who

may escape the ravages of any new disorder, will still tremble least that dreaded evil, the natural Small Pox, which they sought to avoid, should in a luckless hour overtake them.

It is not my intention to pursue further the Report of the Jennerian Committee. I have answered whatever applies materially to my argument: to expose all the errors and fallacies it contains, would be a painful task: I should however be unjust to the Public and myself, did I not state, that besides those I have already noticed, there are in it assertions so unfounded, and expressions so ambiguous, that these alone would have deterred me from subscribing it.

Thus in Article XVI. it is said, that by means of Vaccination, the Small Pox has in some populous Cities been wholly exterminated.

In Article XVIII. that the prejudice raised against Vaccination has been, in great measure, the cause of the death of near 2,000 persons this present year, in London alone.

In Article III. that the cases published to

prove the failure of Vaccination, have been for the most part fully refuted ; and

In Article IV. those Medical Men who dissent from the Jennerian Committee, are stated *generally*, as acting perversely and disingenuously ; persisting in bringing forward unfounded, and refuted reports ; and even misrepresentations, after they have been proved to be such.

Of these Articles I am compelled to say, and am ready to prove, that the three first are absolutely unfounded. Of the last I must declare, that it seems to me conceived in a spirit of illiberality and ungenerous censure, such as I should have imagined a Committee formed of Gentlemen never would have used ; and which certainly no circumstances can justify.

I presume not to judge the motives of action in others ; I know my own, and I am conscious of my sincerity. If I could be actuated by party spirit, I should be unworthy the confidence of the Public. I seek for Truth, and Truth alone. With indignation therefore do I reject the charge of acting perversely, and dis-

ingenuously. When I am convinced of error, I shall take a pride in acknowledging my mistake; 'till then I shall consider it my duty to declare my opinion openly, and to state the reasons, why I have from the first asserted, and why I still continue to assert, that I fear the experiment of Vaccination will be found injurious to the peace, the health, and the welfare of society.*

But since motives of action are called in question, let me mention a few of the circum-

* Though I admit with the Committee, the impropriety of discussing subjects of serious investigation in any other than a serious style, I must object to the manner in which they have worded their Vth Article. Having said, some "printed accounts, adverse to Vaccination, have treated "the subject with indecent and disgusting levity," (expressions I think much too strong, and coarse) they add, "as "if the good or evil of society, were fit objects for sarcasm, "and ridicule." This seems to me an invidious, and an unfair manner of stating the question. The *good* and *evil* of society never were the objects of ridicule. But a system being advanced, which it was apprehended would ultimately prove an evil, not a good, it was thought proper to attack that system: and while *some chose the sober method of argument, †others preferred that of ridicule: still however, it was the *system*, not the good or evil, that was ridiculed: and that system was ridiculed only so far as it was judged likely to injure, rather than benefit society.

* Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Lipscombe. † Dr. Moseley, Lues Bovilla,

stances that have contributed to influence my conduct: they will be found to bear more upon the argument than may at first be imagined. I will afterwards proceed to offer a few strictures on Mr. J. Moore's pamphlet,

The paper which I published in the Gentleman's Magazine, and which I shall here reprint, shews the ground I had to stand upon, in opposing the experiment at its very commencement. I have never changed my opinion; I have uniformly maintained that it was a dangerous practice to introduce a new source of disease into the human frame.

If I have been firm in my sentiments, it is because I have met with nothing in the sequel that has shaken my judgement.

It is true the opinion of some of my colleagues was in direct opposition to mine. I therefore, felt it incumbent on me, carefully and dispassionately to observe the result of the experiment. I did so: I read what was published; and I found from time to time such contradiction in the Reports of the advocates for Vaccination; such fluctuation in their opinion; such inconsistency in their practice;

that the most favorable conclusion I could draw was, they knew not what they were doing. Surely this did not authorize me to alter my original position.

To obviate the objections naturally raised from this extreme uncertainty, and which evidently affected the soundness of the principle on which the System rested; Vaccination was divided into Spurious, and Genuine. I foresaw the consequences. I was satisfied that the Jennerian Society, having once embarked in the cause, would have recourse to any expedient, rather than abandon it: and finding I stood nearly single, and that the tide of Opinion set strong against me, I patiently submitted to have my judgement called in question for a season, resolving to wait a proper period to explain my reasons of dissent.

The Cases of Mr. Hodge's Children occurred, confirming the truth of Mr. Goldson's Reports. I then thought it my duty to print my opinions in support of what that Gentleman had advanced. What I then wrote, and all I have written since, has been couched in the language of Seriousness, and Candour, not of levity or prejudice. Never shall I be

ashamed that I was the first to express a doubt whether Inoculation, so perfectly understood, and so successfully managed as it was, ought to be abandoned for a mere Experiment; holding the change too serious a matter, to be trifled with: neither shall I ever be ashamed to say, that I viewed with indignant scorn, the ungenerous artifice adopted by the Jennerian Society, of sticking up in every Station house, in the Vestries of fanatical Chapels, and in Sunday Schools, that false, *Comparative view of the Effects on Individuals, and Society, by the Small Pox, and the Cow Pox*, ornamented with tablets like a School-boy's writing-piece, representing to the gaping multitude a frightful picture of Inoculation, with the supposed misery attendant on it; and exhibiting representations equally false, and exaggerated of the blessings of Vaccination. When I saw this, and afterwards understood that these disgraceful Pictures were intended for the use of our distant Colonies, where the Truth would long be concealed, and Argument be totally lost, I was compelled to suspect, still more and more, not only the goodness of the cause itself, but the Candour of those who stooped to such means in its support.

Soon after this I heard with great surprise that an application had been made to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, persuading his Grace to direct the Clergy of the Church of England to recommend Vaccination from their pulpits.

I received a letter from the Palace at Lambeth, desiring to know if I had changed the opinion I had originally advanced ; and a respectable Clergyman waited on me from his Grace to talk with me on the subject. Without entering into any argument, I contented myself with relating to him all I knew: shewed him my correspondence with other medical men on the subject, and left him to judge for himself.—He retired from me, saying, “ *His Grace must not commit the Church.* ”—This transaction is perfectly well known I believe to all the Partisans of Vaccination. Why it has never been hinted at by any of the writers in favour of the Cause, and why it has been concealed, is a secret best known to themselves, and the Jennerian Committee.

These circumstances occasioned an increased degree of distrust in my mind ; and

called more loudly for care and circumspection, especially when I recollected the Anniversary dinner of Mr. Guy's hospital in 1802, where I expected to meet the Professors, the Medical Gentlemen, and the Students; on the same terms as usual. What was my surprise then to find, that the sole business of the meeting was to begin a canvass for names to a petition to Parliament, in support of Dr. Jenner's bill? it was presented to me, and I refused to sign it.

My surprise was increased after the dinner, to find that toasts, songs, and compliments from one Professor to another in honour of Vaccina, were the *order of the day*.

As I had seen, among the various business of life, some political manœuvres, and the management of some party schemes, I was not at a loss to conjecture in what manner the cause of Vaccination would be carried on.

The Royal Patronage, the authority of Parliament would be made use of, beyond what the sanction given warranted: the command of the Army and Navy would be adduced, not merely as the mean of facilitating the experiment, but as proof of the triumph of the cause: and

above all, the monopoly of the press, and the freedom of the Post Office would be employed to circulate the assertions of the friends of Vaccination, and to suppress the arguments of their opponents.

What I foresaw happened: and such was the influence of the Jennerian Society, that many publishers, and booksellers refused to print, or sell such works as might be deemed adverse to Vaccine Inoculation: in consequence of which it was hardly possible, at the first moment, to contradict any thing the Society chose to assert. It was in vain to argue against the system; for even the Ladies themselves were prejudiced, were influenced, and employed in its defence. Men midwives found their interests were essentially connected in its success; and they foresaw that if they could vaccinate at the breast, without danger of conveying infection, they should secure to themselves the nursery, as long as Vaccination lasted: no one could enter to interfere with them; they would prescribe for the Apothecary, and hold him at a distance; the Physician and Surgeon would be set aside; and if any accident occurred that rendered a dissection after death necessary, some anatomist,

friendly to the cause, might be called in to quiet the alarms of a family.

The College of Physicians seem at last to have opened their eyes to the innovations of these practitioners, who, like the Jesuits of old, through the medium of the female branches, aim at managing the whole family.

They have therefore forbidden them to prescribe in future for children above two years old; that safe age, before which, unless in peculiar cases, according to Baron Dimsdale, Inoculation ought not to be performed; and that for self evident reasons. For if the loss of beauty, or the probability of danger are proportionate to the crop of pustules in the face, who, but one ignorant of Surgery, would advise that bed of roses, the blooming cheeks of an infant, during the eruptive fever of Small Pox, to be applied to the warm breast of a well fed nurse? What maturing poultice is more likely to invite the pustules to that part? Against this practice every notion of sound sense revolts; and I will venture to affirm that the majority of children who suffer from Inoculation, are those inoculated at the breast.

When therefore such pains are taken to magnify the numbers that fall victims to Small Pox, why is not this pernicious custom, which every sound practitioner reprobates, taken into the account? and why is it not remembered that in the populous parts of the Metropolis, where the abundance of children exceed the means of providing food, and raiment for them, this pestilential disease is considered as a merciful provision on the part of Providence, to lessen the burthen of a poor man's family?

Let the College of Physicians, who examine the Apothecaries' shops in the narrow streets, and suburbs of London, report the state of the medicines, the scales and measures, and the annual reproofs they are constrained to make to many, where,

“ ————— among the shelves

A beggarly account of empty boxes,

Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds;

Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses

Are thinly scattered to make up a shew,”

and then, we shall in some measure be able to determine, how little can with justice be urged against any particular mode of practice, from

the frequency of deaths among the poorer classes of mankind.*

Enough has been said to explain why from the first, I was led to regard with a certain degree of suspicion, the conduct of the friends of Vaccination; and why I have uniformly disapproved their proceedings. It remains to make some observations on an ingenious pamphlet written by Mr. J. Moore, hitherto the best defender of the Jennerian cause. What Dr. Thornton will produce, who has announced himself employed by the Committee, to answer the wit of Dr. Moseley, and the sober arguments of Mr. Lipscombe, the event will prove. I doubt not but that Dr. Moseley will be able to answer all that Dr. Thornton shall advance.

* One of the most prevalent causes of death among infants, is the loss of their mother's milk. Women who abandon their own children, to sell their milk to a stranger, will be found too frequently to have destroyed their deserted babes. An Hospital under the Queen's patronage, was settled at Bay's-Water, to receive the children thus deserted, but it subsisted a very short period, for all the children died. The Foundling Hospital, the *Enfant trouvé* at Paris, and the registers of large parishes, will elucidate this fact; but it is never mentioned in the Bills of Mortality.

With respect to Mr. J. Moore, he certainly deserves some praise for the pleasant manner in which he has treated the subject: but much more for the candour he has shewn. I must do him the justice to point this out, lest the Reader, seduced by his pleasantry, should suffer himself to misconstrue the Author's intentions.

I cannot however discover in Mr. J. Moore's pamphlet, any answer to the arguments of Mr. Rogers; or any thing like a reply to the five questions in my printed Letter. A particular reply indeed I was not to expect; for he chuses to unite all the writers against Vaccination in one class; as if he wished that a censure applicable to any one of them individually, might attach to them all generally. As I do not approve this method, which is unfair and sophistical, I shall not follow it; neither will I pay his ingenuity so bad a compliment, as to couple him with Mr. Ring, to whom, perhaps, Mr. Squirrel is a more than equal antagonist.

Mr. Moore, in the beginning of his book, for what reason I cannot discern, pays a studied compliment to the humanity of the Faculty of

Medicine, at the expence of Surgeons. But he must allow me to say, it is the peculiar boast of Surgery, to have softened the malignity, and to have discovered the cure of two of the greatest evils that afflict mortality; in the judicious practice of Inoculation, and by the improved treatment of Lues Venerea.

Surgery has positive grounds to rest upon, which will for ever secure to it the gratitude, and the support of mankind; if it ever should lose any part of its due estimation, this will be owing to the unwarrantable presumption of some, who practise it without being properly educated in its principles.

Every Apothecary's journeyman, lectured for six months to pass an examination for the lower ranks of the Army and Navy, now pretends to be a proficient in this art.

The fatal consequences that result from uneducated practitioners in every branch of medicine assuming the province of the Surgeon, and experimenting on Inoculation, is justly depicted in the Report of the Jennerian Society. Mr. Moore makes the same observation, and tells us, that the results from this ge-

neral practice were so different to the accounts of Dr. Jenner and his friends, that many experiments were set on foot, in order to establish a permanent theory. By these it was ascertained, that Dr. Jenner's account of the origin of the disease was unfounded, and untrue. This was a distressing circumstance to befall the great Father of the Experiment, as he was called, who ought certainly to have been, morally speaking, sure of his principle of action, before he ventured to propose it to the Public, or petition Parliament for a reward for his discoveries. It was now asked, what had he discovered? What had he recommended? What were his principles as well in Theory, as Practice? These were awkward questions; to answer them was difficult: therefore to avoid the perplexing appeals that were daily made to him, and the messages that were perpetually sent requesting him to visit untoward cases, the Doctor retired from London. Had matters gone on smoothly, the Doctor would have found it his interest to have remained in the Metropolis.

The horrible description which Mr. Moore paints of the Confluent Small Pox, and of the Lues Venerea, may be just: but as they happily

are not often seen, if ever, where proper treatment can be procured, and will be followed; they stand as extreme cases, on which the rhetorician may declaim, indeed, but from which the sound reasoner can draw no conclusive argument. I see not, therefore, what Mr. Moore gains to his cause by the description. I must however, thank him for it, as he thus affords me an opportunity of saying, that it is the pride of Surgery, to have reduced the mortality consequent on the first of these disorders, to one in a thousand; and that attendant on the last, to nearly the same proportion.

The Natural Small Pox might almost always be avoided, if Inoculation were duly performed: and instances of persons dying of Lues Venerea, except in ill conducted Workhouses, are almost unknown to regular Surgeons.

Mr. Moore asserts, that Vaccination was opposed before any facts could be alleged against it. But in so early a stage of the business as when before the Committee of the House of Commons, I brought *three* cases, and named *four* others, of Small Pox following Vaccination. Was this opposing without facts?

Nay, it was these very cases that taught Dr. Woodville, what he had mistaken for an Hybrid Eruption, was real Small Pox ; and which made Mr. Cline acknowledge, that Vaccination would not prevent Small Pox, where the patient had breathed variolous atmosphere.

Our Author goes on to relate the rapidity with which Vaccination was spread through every part of the world. That the progress of Vaccination was rapid, beyond almost belief, I readily admit : that this circumstance is a proof of the merits of the System I deny.—We live in a capricious age ; an age that is fond of believing paradoxes, and of grasping at novelty. And this alone might account for the wonderful avidity with which the experiment was adopted. But there were other causes that co-operated, and I have already specified them. So long as the liberty of the Post Office was allowed, and the Press was in possession of the Society, had their scheme been more objectionable than it is, it would with facility have been at home propagated ; and as for the Continent, English faith stood so firm there about that period, that any thing from England was received as sterling. Yet I had ac-

counts even from the Continent, very different to Mr. Moore's representation ; accounts which lamented the too easy faith of some Hanoverian parents, whose children were the victims of this new experiment.

Mr. Moore's candour begins to shew itself about the ninth page, where he admits this Cow Pox to be erroneously attributed to that gentle Animal. " No Cow that is allowed to suckle her own Calf, untouched by the Milker, ever had this complaint." He concludes therefore, that the Vaccine Disease is some pollution, imposed upon the harmless Animal by contact of the Milker. This I can readily believe to be the case. We do not understand indeed by what law of Nature the corrupt humour of an human disease, acting on the teats of an harmless animal, can generate a new disorder ; but it seems to be the only rational way of accounting for the phænomenon ; and nothing remains for us but to enquire what that disease is, which being communicated from the Milker, produces the Vaccine Matter.—Is it the Itch ? the Lues Vénerea ? or the Small Pox itself ? —It evidently must be something common

among the lower orders, for with them it originates: I could almost be tempted to think it was often the Itch.

A man applied to me at St. Thomas's Hospital to examine his hand and arm, which were full of ulcerations. He said he belonged to a milk house near the end of Kent-street; that several of the milkers were in the same condition with himself; and that most of the cows teats, belonging to the house, were affected in a similar manner; he added, he had been told it was Cow Pox.

As I had not been accustomed to see the natural Cow Pox, I asked one of my Pupils from the country, what he thought of the case. He replied, that the patient exhibited every symptom of having the itch, in that stage, which is commonly called the Rank Itch. On farther examination the appearance about the fingers confirmed his observation; I directed the man to use Jackson's Itch Ointment, and he appeared again at the end of a week, quite cured.

From this accidental circumstance, and from the tormenting itching which some children

when vaccinated, are afflicted with, it will be worth while for the Committee to enquire whether the itch may not be one of the diseases that form the base of the Vaccine Matter.

—At all events since the Cow is proved innocent, and the Milker alone guilty, it will be proper to ascertain what the complaints are to which the Milkers in Glostershire, and in Holstein are liable.

Dr. Jenner's theory of the grease of the horse, is now given up, even by his best friends: but surely, it is time either for himself or them to find us some just criterion that may enable us to distinguish the genuine source from which it originates. Why however are we forbidden to inoculate from the Cow herself? Does her simple food increase the virulence of that disease with which the foul milker contaminates her teats? or again, must the disease be meliorated by passing through some human victim, who is perhaps to be sacrificed in consequence, before it can be fit for general use?

What the Small Pox is, we know; and we know also, that when given properly by Inoculation it will communicate a mild disease to the human frame. I say we are fully ac-

quainted with the benefits and the management of that meliorated contagion ; a management so simple, that we have little to apprehend even from the unskilfulness of ignorant Practitioners ; and a benefit so unalloyed, that the experience of now near a century, has proved, that the use of it does not contribute to swell the catalogue of human woes by new disorders. I see not therefore what wisdom there is in wishing to drop Small Pox Inoculation altogether, (for that is the clamorous demand of the Jennerian Society;) and inoculate from a disease, the nature of which we know not : a disease so varying, and so ambiguous in its appearance and effects, that even the most skilful Vaccinator, even Dr. Jenner himself, who has proudly suffered himself to be called, “ The man destined to expel contagion,”* cannot be certain when it is commu-

* When Dr. Jenner’s Bust was exposed at the Exhibition last year, it was subscribed, if I mistake not, with the following lines of the *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles.

The Man—

By great Apollo’s high command ordain’d
T’expel the foul contagion from this land ;
Nursed there too long, but to be nursed no more.

Dr. J. was, I understand, wonderfully pleased with the application ; which certainly was very ingenious, and only

nicated, and when not ; when it is genuine, when spurious ; a disease that has already given suffering mortality, a new malady, which, whether it shall be called the Cow Evil, from the animal, or the Jennerian Evil from the inventor, posterity will determine.

But why do I say the inventor? I beg pardon of this “ expeller of contagion,” if I state, that the Cow Pox has been known for generations. If it has not been brought forward before, the reason is, that the Physicians of former days, less confident, and less empirick than some of the present, thought it unbecoming their character, and what they owed Society, to obtrude any experiment, which they were not fully satisfied was a salutary one. They therefore tried it in silence ; they found, notwithstanding an apparent success at first, that it failed ultimately, and they dropped it. I shall instance no other name than that of Sir George Baker, who had Dr. Jenner’s *invention* mentioned to him forty years

wanted truth to be really admirable. If a second Bust were to appear, I apprehend a more appropriate, though less splendid motto would be

DAVUS sum, non Œdipus.

ago; it was tried, it failed, and no more was said of it. Mr. John Hunter did not give the Experiment much credit. The event justifies their conduct: for surely it does not do much honour to the cause, much less does it accord with the positive assurances given Parliament, for Dr. Jenner to lay down a Theory, to be obliged to recant it, and to leave the Public nothing satisfactory in its place: it does us nationally no great honour to have the Cow Pox make so much noise all over the world, and then to be declared no Cow Pox: neither does it argue much in favour of the wisdom of the Faculty, to adopt so blindly a practice, which the first Leaders seem to know nothing about after seven years experience, except, that it fully contradicts the evidence they produced in the House of Commons in its favor.

It is allowed by all the writers among the Vaccinists, that from the Cow is to be got a genuine and a spurious matter. I cannot understand this doctrine; it seems contrary to the general Laws of Nature; she has given us a genuine but no spurious Small Pox: a genuine but no spurious Measles. More merciful in her operations, than Vaccinators; she gives us a specific evil, that we may know how

to administer specific remedies; and when we may be securely freed from the dread of its recurrence.

But since a genuine and a spurious Cow Pox is admitted by Vaccinists, how do they account for it? 'Till wiser heads than mine have determined this point, I will suggest the following conjecture:—

It is allowed on all hands, that Cow Pox is generated by some disorder imparted by the milker. Now if that disorder should happen to be the Small Pox, then the Pustule so occasioned, and the matter coming from it, may inoculate Small Pox, and the patient thus inoculated, may be for ever secure from that disease, for in fact he will have received Small Pox Inoculation. But if the disorder generated on the Cow's teats, have for its base, Itch, as I apprehend has sometimes happened, then the patient will be inoculated with a disorder, which, though it may suspend the capacity for Small Pox for a season in the constitution, will ultimately prove no security.

Notwithstanding Mr. Moore's pleasant way

of treating the subject, he cannot laugh away this simple argument.

If there is no such disease belonging to the Animal as Cow Pox, if she must be subject to infections from the hand of him to whom she spares her milk, and sacrifices her calf, let us be acquainted with the nature of these infections, and do not let us so inhumanly submit our babes, while smiling in the mother's face, to, *we know not what!*

In the Small Pox, and other infectious disorders, I repeat, we know of nothing spurious; the matter inoculated from a patient who may die afterwards of the Confluent Small Pox, will produce nothing but a mild disease; nothing but Small Pox.

When the Societies quarrelled, and parted, they were almost upon the point of declaring, that one was the genuine, the other the spurious Society, for exterminating the Small Pox. This would have been a death blow to the whole system. The friends of both parties saw this; an accommodation was effected: like the contending heroes on the stage, they said,

“ *Brother, brother, we are both in the wrong;*” they shook hands, and agreed at all events to support the Experiment.

I shall not take notice of that part of our Author’s pamphlet, which attacks the Physicians; not only because I conceive it beside my immediate subject, but because I consider “ *The Commentaries on the Cow Pox,*” lately published by Dr. Moseley, to contain a full answer to all that Mr. Moore has asserted on this head.

Those pages which are employed in describing the nature of Small Pox, and other infectious diseases, are well worth attending to; though they are written with such affectation of wit, that if hastily perused, they may be mistaken.

However, I admire Mr. Moore’s candour, as I collect from these pages, that he is of opinion the *Small Pox cannot be twice received*; and observe, that he admits some cases to have occurred, where the Small Pox has appeared on persons who had apparently passed through the Cow Pox, in a regular way. He then concludes, “ *A true Philosopher knows*

“ there is no real exception to the Laws of
 “ Nature ; apparent deviations are common,
 “ but the Laws of Nature are immutable.”
 And again he observes, “ If Medical men were
 “ as ready to own their errors as Chemists,
 “ they would not so often accuse Nature of
 “ being so capricious as they do.

“ To admit that a few individuals organised
 “ like others, are susceptible of having certain
 “ diseases twice, while the flood of mankind
 “ can only have them once, is almost a contra-
 “ diction in the uniformity of the Laws of
 “ Cause and Effect.”

These are sentiments so just in themselves, and conceived in such a spirit of candour and liberality, that although Mr. Moore discovers sometimes a little flippancy of wit he had better have spared, and although he sometimes deals too much in authoritative assertion which does not sit well on him, I nevertheless sincerely wish he had been employed earlier in the controversy: the question then probably would have been more easily decided.

I lament, however, that he will not suffer

his own principles to produce with himself that conviction I apprehend they ought.

If a true philosopher knows there are no real exceptions to the Laws of Nature, then a patient *cannot have the Small Pox twice*. But Mr. Moore admits that patients have had the real Small Pox after Vaccination; the disease therefore which the Vaccine matter excited, could not have been Small Pox; and consequently, those patients (except in the cases suggested in page 45) remain liable to it, as soon as the suspending power of the Vaccine disease shall have ceased.

This argument is so simple a one, and the conclusion in my mind so just, that I feel confident its force must be felt by every impartial person.

What Mr. Moore says of the primary, and secondary Small Pox, in which all sound Practitioners will readily concur with him, proves every thing I could wish in favour of my argument.

Whoever has read the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, would conclude from the multitude of evidence there

adduced, that the practice of Vaccination was at that time perfectly settled and understood. But Mr. Moore informs us, “ All the peculiarities of this curious complaint were not *detected* at once. In the first two or three years it was not to be expected that the Art of Vaccination should be brought to perfection. It is therefore not to be wondered at if among the multitude of Surgeons, Apothecaries, *Clergymen*, and *Ladies*, who practised, a few mistakes have happened.”

That no experiment is perfected at once, even where the principles are just, I readily allow: it is no more than what must be expected from the imperfection of human wisdom. What I complain of, is, that while Vaccination was nothing more than an experiment it should have been, not merely recommended to the public notice, but authoritatively imposed on the public practice. If it should be argued that Inoculation was urged with nearly as much earnestness; I shall reply that the cases are altogether different. Inoculation when brought into England was no longer a mere experiment: it was a practice confirmed by the experience of generations in foreign countries: and as the laws of Nature could

not be supposed to be different here, and in Turkey, the opposition -made to Inoculation might be fairly said to have been the result of ignorance, and prejudice.

I must be permitted however to observe, in answer to Mr. Moore's statement, that among the *multitude of Surgeons*, hardly any of the Court of Assistants of the College are to be found. That Parliament should have omitted to consult the College of Surgeons, seems to me an oversight hardly to be accounted for. As Parliament could not be supposed to act from any knowledge of their own; the merits of the case not depending on the science of politics, or legislation, but on that of surgery and medicine, common prudence should have dictated the propriety of consulting the Colleges of these two professions, who might be supposed competent to give them the information they wanted. When the College of Physicians were applied to, they gave a negative answer. Had the College of Surgeons been consulted, they would have discovered a truth, which has not yet been revealed. The only surgeons of that court, whose names appear in the Report of the Jennerian Society, are Mr. Ford, and Mr. Home.

But the apothecaries are men of experience; how came their *multitudes* to join so readily in the experiment? Why, they came into the new practice, because they early discovered it was the plan of the men-midwives to seclude them, by this manœuvre, from the nurseries: and finding they could not fight them fairly on their own ground, they resolved, by forming an alliance, to share, if possible, the conquest.

The co-operation of the Clergy (I speak of those of the Established Church, and I speak of them with that reverence due to so learned, and so respectable a body), may be accounted for, from that solicitude to benefit the bodies, as well as the souls of men, which forms part of the ministerial character. I think however that they would have done wiser, to have waited till the experiment was so firmly established that they could not have stood committed by any subsequent failure: for in proportion to the sacredness of any character, ought to be the scrupulous desire of avoiding what might expose it to censure.

As for the Sectarian preachers, whether in, or out of the church, they saw it was an easy

way of securing acceptance to their peculiar tenets, by stealing, under the specious appearance of Charity, and Philanthropy, into the bosom of maternal tenderness: while the tender sex, who from innate benevolence are ever ready to assist in doing good, were flattered, were soothed, and were instructed, “to insinuate the plot into the boxes.” Dr. Jenner took so much pains to teach some ladies to vaccinate with a light hand, that one of them declared she only brought blood from two in the village; and that only one family among her patients had shewn any symptom of the Cow Pox disorders.

Mr. Moore tells us that all the misfortunes have happened about Chelsea, and in London; and that there has hardly been a suspicion of any failures in opulent families.

There is something very insidious and unjust in these assertions: they afford almost the only instance of disingenuous reasoning to be found in Mr. Moore’s book. By stating the failures to have occurred round Chelsea, I presume he aims at one of the opposers of Vaccination, whose practice lying much in that part of the

country, if it could be shewn that no cases came from other quarters, he would infer that those adduced were the result either of the want of candour, or want of skill in a prejudiced individual: and by asserting that there is hardly any suspicion of failure among the opulent, he would insinuate, that those cases instanced from among the poor are not to be credited; the poor not having the means of contradicting, what may be asserted of them.

To the first of these insinuations I reply, by saying, that there are few parts of the kingdom from which I will not pledge myself to bring instances of failure in Vaccination, as notorious as any mentioned in the vicinity of Chelsea, and London.

To the second I reply, by asserting that it is unfounded. There is a degree of respect due to the superior orders of society which exacts from us, when speaking of them, an increased degree of delicacy. To proclaim that an afflictive malady has befallen an individual in the lower orders of society, can be productive of no great inconvenience: to proclaim the same of persons who perhaps may be connected with some of the first families in the

kingdom, would be a serious evil. I think Mr. Moore therefore highly to blame, in using an argument which he must be aware from a sentiment of delicacy could never perhaps be answered as it ought. I trust however I am not infringing the rule I wish to observe when I say, that if Dr. Jenner were again to apply to Parliament for support, he would find from many members of both Houses that marked opposition to his pretensions, which would prove a full answer to this assertion of our Author.

Mr. Moore acknowledges one benefit to have arisen from the opposition made to Vaccination, namely, the improvement of the Practice; and he says, a little more time will dispel the prejudices of the inferior Practitioners, and the vulgar.

If the lower orders of society have conceived prejudices against Vaccination, it will not be easy to root them out: for not only do they know from sad experience that it does not answer but they have been so ungenerously deceived and imposed on, by the Inoculators at the Small Pox Hospital, and other places,

where Cow Pox was inserted when they were told they were to be inoculated with Small Pox, that they do not know where to put their trust. This is such an instance of *bad faith*, as, I hope, will never occur again ; every principle of humanity revolts against it. Was it not sufficient to have had recourse to every possible means of perverting the judgment of the poor by every artifice ingenuity could suggest, but, when still unconvinced of the efficacy of Vaccination, they demanded to be inoculated with small Pox, must they be systematically deceived ? and implicitly relying on the honour of the Operator, must they be clandestinely contaminated with the very disease they were anxious to avoid ?

“ ——— Speak it in whispers lest a Greek should hear !
 Lives there a man so dead to fame, who dares
 To think such meanness, or the thought declares :
 And comes it ev’n from him, whose Sov’reign sway
 The banded Legions of all Greece obey ?”

Mr. Waeschall I have understood is not to be blamed for this imposition on their good faith ; he is but a servant of the charity, and must follow orders. Where do these orders

originate? Who is to blame? Let us know where to fix the stigma.*

It has been asserted, that more children have died within the last twelve months of Small Pox, than in any former year: and from this circumstance an argument has been raised to discredit Inoculation: but in my mind a conclusion exactly opposite ought to be drawn from it.

If the fatality of Small Pox has been greater during the last year, than for several years preceding, this is owing to the suspension of Inoculation, having left more subjects open to its infection. For many with whom the suspending power of Vaccination had subsided, fell unsuspecting victims to the Natural Disease: and many others perished by it, who

* Small Pox Hospitals, *if properly conducted*, appear to me such useful charities in a great Metropolis, that I could wish to see them maintained even at the Public expence: since from such Institutions, every Parish might be supplied, at stated periods, with proper Medical men, who should inoculate the Poor gratis. By this means, and by compelling the parents to abstain from public exposure, the evils of Natural Small Pox would in a short time be easily subdued.

had been left open to its attack, because their parents justly objected to the unfair proceedings of those Practitioners who substituted Cow Pox, for Small Pox; and having thus lost all confidence in the integrity of the Faculty, and not knowing whom to trust, they suffered the natural disease to take its fatal course.

Let us put things upon the old footing; let us drop Vaccination altogether for seven years, and practise only Small Pox Inoculation, and if the mortality in Small Pox do not return to its old standard, I will be content to give up my opinion, and become as devout a worshipper of the Cow, as any idolater within the realms of Hindostan, or the precincts of Salisbury Court.

That there always has been a mortality attendant on Small Pox, even when Inoculation alone was adopted, no one can deny. I deny however, that this mortality ever has been as great as Mr. Moore asserts, or as the friends of Vaccination, éager to establish their own system by discrediting the other, have wished to make the Public to believe. But what makes more to the argument is, that it will be easy to

point out the flagrant error to which the mortality may be referred : namely, the public exposure of patients during the eruptive state of the disorder. A common error, which has been made use of to raise a prejudice against Inoculation, but which, so far from forming a necessary part of the treatment, has been expressly forbidden by that able and successful Practitioner Baron Dimsdale. I cannot help therefore humbly suggesting, that the Legislature would do well thus far to interfere, and by prohibiting under penalty such improper exposure remedy an evil, which otherwise society must continue to suffer from the ignorance, or perversity of unskilful Practitioners.

The last objection I shall notice is one on which it seems to have been the aim of Vaccinators to lay great stress, viz. that what is called the King's Evil, generally takes its rise from Inoculation : this is particularly depicted in some of the engravings of that disgraceful production I have mentioned in a former page, "The view of the comparative effects of Inoculation, and Vaccination."

I shall answer this assertion, not by entering into any discussion on the nature of Scro-

phula in general; to do this satisfactorily I should be obliged to swell my paniphlet beyond the size calculated for general circulation; but by simply adducing matters of fact: a mode of arguing to plain and unsophisticated minds always the most agreeable, and certainly the most conclusive.

I must therefore remind Mr. Moore, and the partisans of Vaccination, that Scrophula was far more prevalent before, than after the introduction of Inoculation.

Who now ever hears of crowds of people flocking from the most distant counties to be cured by the supposed virtue of the Royal Touch? Who now sees those pieces of gold, which in the reign of King James the First, and long after, were suspended so generally as amulets, endued with sovereign power to cure the Evil?

But this I shall be told is only a presumptive argument. I grant it: a more positive one is, that I could adduce several large families of children, where this glandular complaint has for generations been acknowledged to be hereditary, who, having been all regularly Ino-

culated by able practitioners, have grown up to full maturity without suffering from Scrophula, or so much as ever exhibiting symptoms of this disorder.

I have now noticed all that Mr. Moore has brought forward in any shape relevant to the question; and the result is, that I am still more than ever convinced of the propriety of adhering to those opinions, I from the first entertained, of the inefficacy of Vaccination.

I am willing to pay this Author the compliment, that if the cause could have been defended satisfactorily, it would have been so defended by him,

Si Pergama dextra

Defendi possent, etiam hæc defensa fuissent.

but, my conviction is, that the system does not rest on any solid foundation; that it never can stand. For let us candidly and impartially sum up all that has been established, after the experience of now above seven years; let us compare the result, with the promised advantages, and let us come fairly to our conclusion.

When the Committee of the House of Commons recommended Dr. Jenner to the munificence of Parliament, it was for a discovery in practice which was never to prove fatal; which was to excite no new humours, or disorders in the constitution; and which was to be, not only a perfect security against the Small Pox, but would, if universally adopted, prevent its recurrence for ever.

Here then are three distinct points on which Dr. Jenner stands pledged to give the public the fullest satisfaction; otherwise, not only will he fail in his part of the contract, but the experiment itself will fail of having any claim to public notice or support.

Let us see what Dr. Jenner has done to establish the justness of his several positions in favour of Cow Pox.

And first he was called upon, as might naturally be expected, to give an account of the origin of the disease itself:

This could not be considered as a difficult task; for surely Dr. Jenner would not propose

to inoculate from a disorder without knowing what that disorder was. He therefore assured the world, that it originated from the grease of the horse's heel, communicated by the hands of the milker to the teats of the cow.

This theory, which in itself was suspicious, by subsequent experiments was proved to be erroneous: however from that hour to the present, Dr. Jenner has been able to advance nothing satisfactory, and he has left us at this very moment in the dark as to the real nature and origin of the Vaccine Disease.

But though Dr. Jenner could not tell us what the Cow Pox was, he soon came forward to inform us that it was of two sorts, the one genuine, and harmless, the other spurious, and hurtful:

This was a discovery so much the more alarming as at the same time no criterion but the effect was given, by which the two sorts could be distinguished. Here then was a direct failure, on the part of Dr. Jenner in his agreement, if I may so call it, with the Houses of Parliament.

But yet further. In cases where Vaccination did not produce fatal consequences, it gave rise to new, and painful disorders. It was followed sometimes by itchy eruptions; sometimes by singular ulcerations; and sometimes by glandular swellings of a nature wholly distinct from Scrophula, or any other known glandular disease. Here, again was a failure in the second point stipulated: and finally,

It was ascertained that even when Vaccination was performed, from what was called the genuine matter, it would not always prove a preservative against the Small Pox: as several patients, who had been pronounced by the most experienced Vaccinators to have passed regularly through the Cow Pox, were nevertheless attacked with the genuine Small Pox.

These points being established, and they are established by the most uncontested facts, facts which the public are not called upon to believe on the assertions of those who oppose Vaccination, but on the confessions of those who support it, how can Dr. Jenner be said to have fulfilled what he stood pledged to Parlia-

ment to execute? and not fulfilling his agreement, how can his system claim reasonably any longer its support?

Were an architect to undertake to build an edifice which he engaged should be firm, and unshaken in its foundations; all its rooms wind and water tight; and such as might be inhabited with perfect security: if before the edifice were well finished the foundations were discovered to be rotten; and if in less than seven years, several apartments had fallen in and killed those who occupied them, while in a great number of rooms, the wind or rain was perpetually beating in, could I be blamed for declaring that the architect had broken his contract, and that the edifice ought to be no longer tenanted? should I deserve the opprobrium of acting perversely, and disingenuously, if I advised my friends not to quit their own houses, where they had lived securely for generations, to occupy apartments where they could never be free from danger? Certainly not. Every body would say, that in giving this advice I was acting the part of a real friend! Why then am I to be told I am acting *disingenuously*, or *perversely*, when I

remonstrate against the general practice of the Cow Pox? for, such an edifice as I have described above, so rotten in its foundation, so ill built, so ruinous, is Vaccination:

Has the conduct of the friends of Vaccination in supporting and recommending their system been such as to impress me with a favourable opinion of the system? No! Their conduct has been marked with so much art, and trick, and contrivance, nay, so much deceit has been resorted to, that this circumstance alone would make me suspect the goodness of the cause altogether, and the motives that influence its partisans.

Or again, have the writers in favour of Vaccination been able to produce any thing that has operated conviction? Certainly not. They have disproved no well attested fact: they have confined themselves for the most part to railery and contemptuous sneers at their opponents; and the Jennerian Society itself, when it publishes a report, advances such unfounded assertions, and uses such equivocal language as I think never could have been employed had the system been a good one.

Why then, or on what grounds, am I to come into the opinions of the Jennerian Society? Is there any thing in their conduct that can prepossess me in their favour? any thing in their practice to recommend them?

But arguments may be fallacious—let us come to facts. Can any one disprove the three following:

That Vaccination has been too often fatal:

That Vaccination has introduced new disorders into the human system:

That Vaccination is not a perfect security against the Small Pox.

These facts I maintain can never be disproved.

That Vaccination is sometimes fatal may be shewn, not vaguely by assigning to it the subsequent death of the patient, as the only probable cause, but from destructive inflammation which, in some instances, has arisen

immediately from the puncture of Cow Pox Inoculation; a case that never did occur in Small Pox Inoculation.

That Vaccination introduces new disorders, is proved from a new genus of disease, unknown to any former practitioner; unknown till after the introduction of the Cow Pox: and never to be found but in those subjects who have had that disorder.

That Vaccination is not a perfect security against the Small Pox—*we have the confession of the Jennerian Committee itself.*

Let these facts be considered, and then let the concluding sentence of the report of the Jennerian Committee be read.

How after all that has been established, and admitted, can it be said “that mankind have already derived great and incalculable benefits from the discovery of Vaccination?” how can it be maintained there is full cause for believing, that Cow Pox Inoculation will ultimately succeed in extinguishing the Small Pox?

And yet this conclusion is subscribed by a list of many respectable names. I really could almost be tempted to believe that some of those signatures have been applied further than was intended : and that there are those among the subscribers, who only wishing to encourage the experiment, have been made appear to support the system.

However this may be, one thing is certain ; those names convey in reality only the opinion of so many practitioners. Now, the opinion of the wisest men that ever lived, if in opposition to facts, must be erroneous, and consequently of no authority. Besides which on the very score of opinion something ought to be taken into consideration.

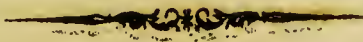
There are persons in the list whose abilities, whose character, and knowledge I revere ; I might instance Dr. Baillie, and some others ; but there are those among them whose abilities, whose character, and knowledge I do not revere : whose opinions consequently, have no weight with me, and ought not, I think, to have any with the public.

These then are the grounds on which I feel myself justified in adhering to the opinion I first declared before the Committee of the House of Commons; and these are the reasons for which I do not hesitate to pronounce, that I think the high sanction that has been given to the Cow Pox Experiment, as well from the Royal Name, as from the protection of Parliament, ought to be withdrawn: for that sanction is deservedly of such weight, that remote practitioners do not even give the subject a consideration, but conclude that a system so recommended must be unexceptionable.

I trust it will not be supposed, from what I have said, that I am presuming to censure either that August Personage, or the Houses of Parliament, for the support they have afforded the cause of Vaccination. What they did arose from that parental solicitude which they feel, and never can cease to feel for the welfare of individuals, and the happiness of the community: and though I may think the experiment was not sufficiently tried before it was recommended, still they did but exercise that principle, which has been so often exerted for the public good; and which has procured

us blessings, eminently greater than any enjoyed by the other nations of the world.

That Dr. Jenner should have been remunerated by the munificence of Parliament I conceive to be no more than just; on this general principle, that he who neglects his own private interests, in order to promote the public benefit, has some claim for public compensation. That the experiment itself should have been made, I likewise think wise; because it is only from experiment that we can ascertain what is, or what is not, beneficial to society. But I can neither think it just, nor wise, that when Vaccination has failed in so many points of accomplishing those ends it promised to accomplish: it should still continue to receive that degree of sanction and support, which a completely successful, and unobjectionable practice, alone, is entitled to enjoy.



J. Smeeton, Printer, 148, St. Martin's Lane.

THE following paper was originally printed in 1804, and circulated among my intimate Friends, and some of the Faculty, as a private appeal to them in vindication of the opinion, against Vaccination, I had delivered before the Committee of the House of Commons.

In 1805 it appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine, the only publication that then would venture to insert any thing adverse to the Vaccine System. I now re-print it, together with my Letter to Mr Rogers, and his Examination of the Evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, that every candid Person may judge, how far the language I have used in investigating this question is illiberal, and improper ; or, how far the manner in which I have conducted the enquiry has been either perverse or disingenuous.

The celebrated Dr. George Fordyce maintained it as his opinion, to others

as well as myself, that Vaccination was an unnatural experiment, unphilosophical, and unsafe. The arguments he adduced in confirmation of this opinion were so logical, and conclusive, I am more than ever satisfied my sentiments will not be found erroneous.

Having now discharged my duty towards the Public, and the Profession, I shall henceforth take leave of the subject: and I quit it without any unbecoming fears, or apprehensions. I feel a well grounded persuasion that my opinions will ultimately be acknowledged to be just; and at all events, when time shall have abated somewhat of Party Spirit, I am confident justice will be done to my Sincerity.

Magna est Veritas et Prævalebit.

HAD the Inoculation for what has been called Cow-pox succeeded, agreeably to the sanguine promises and expectations of its advocates, I should have thought myself called upon to recant the opinion I gave to the Committee of the House of Commons, and to apologize for having persevered in it; but as the experiment has failed in several instances, and the truth can no longer be concealed from the public, I think it necessary to appeal to the judgement of discerning persons, whether I have not been treated with much injustice for firmly maintaining an opinion for which I had such strong grounds.

It was a maxim handed down to us while I was a Student at St. Thomas's Hospital, "Never to sacrifice Experience to Experiment;" and therefore in Diseases for the treatment of which Time and Observation had laid down a rule of successful practice, I am cautious how I exchange this for new opinions.

The judicious manner in which my excellent friend, Baron Dimsdale managed the Inoculation for Small Pox, had long convinced me that if any man deserved well of his Country, he was entitled at least to the *thanks* of the Legislature ; and the opportunities I had of making myself acquainted with his opinions, taught me to listen with caution to any new practice, which was to overturn all I had made myself master of.

When therefore it was proposed to me, to *introduce a new Disease into the human system*, I hesitated ; but on the assurance given to me, that it was still milder than the Inoculated Small Pox, was productive of no ill consequences, and would equally arrest the progress of variolous Infection, I consented that Abraham Howard, the first Child mentioned at my Examination, should be vaccinated. The Cow Pox terminated successfully, but the Child afterwards sickened, and had an eruption, which I considered the Small Pox, though others called it an *Hybrid Eruption*, an appearance which I was told had been described as not uncommon at the Small Pox Hospital,

when the patient had been previously in a variolous Atmosphere.

*Two other Cases however were followed by distinct and unequivocal Small Pox after Vaccination, and then it was admitted that the Cow Pox would not arrest the progress of *variolous* Infection; although it is well known Inoculation of the Small Pox within a limited period will *supersede* and *subdue* it.

These Cases ascertained that there was no such thing as an Hybrid or Mulish Eruption, but that what had been called so at the Small Pox Hospital was the real Small Pox.

I appeal therefore to persons of Discernment, whether such mistakes in the outset of a new practice were not sufficient grounds for a cautious man to admit some doubts of the danger of introducing a new disease into the human system. The opinion which I gave to the Committee was supported by such proofs, in the answers sent to their enquiries and published in their Report, from Messrs.

• Will. Rinch, M. Solloway—*vide Report*.

Slater of Wycomb, Groves^{nor} of Oxford, Nooth of Bath, and Dr. Hope of Haslar Hospital, that what I have seen and heard since has only served to determine me not to be misled by the fashionable rage.

The steady and single opinion I have maintained in opposition to this practice, has brought me acquainted with some new Eruptions, Abscesses and Disorders, which I had not before observed; but these accidents are generally attributed to a *Spurious* sort of Cow Pox. This is a term I do not admit of; I know of no such thing as *Spurious* Small Pox, *Spurious* Lues Venera, *Spurious* Scrofula. We are yet left unsatisfied as to the nature and origin of what is called Cow Pox. It is a disorder known only to the Cow Doctor in *dirty* dairies; though we are taught to play with it as a blessing revealed from Heaven to this enlightened age.

If I wished to corroborate the grounds for my doubts, I might mention an almost equally fashionable rage, which had seized too many of the faculty, previous to the appearance of Cow Pox, in favour of the Nitrous

Acid, as a remedy for the Venereal Disease. Mercury was no longer to be called in aid, and the press teemed with publications to prove the mistaken opinions of hospital Surgeons. This Novelty I resisted with equal firmness; here I was unwilling to give up *Experience for Experiment*, wanting nothing more safe or certain than Mercury, which for so many years, in the practice of so many competent Judges, had proved an Antidote to that malignant poison. The advocates for the Nitrous Acid are now no longer heard of, the books on the subject no longer regarded.

Sacrificing therefore every consideration to my actual Opinion, I have avoided the practice of Vaccination, but I have watched the result of it. I do not mean to enter into the proofs of its failures, or mistakes: Mr. Goldson has published some, in a very candid pamphlet—more are expected from another pen; and unless the first Projectors have something better to say, than what has yet been said, to reconcile the public mind to those Cases of Mr. Hodges' Children, in Fullward's Rents, Holborn; I shall continue firm in the opinion

I gave to the Committee of the House of Commons, THAT WHAT HAS BEEN CALLED THE COW POX IS NOT A PRESERVATIVE AGAINST THE NATURAL SMALL POX.

JOHN BIRCH.

Spring Gardens,
October, 1804.

ERRATUM.

Page 45, line 11, read page 41.





Accession no.
HC

Author
Birch, J.
Serious reasons
for uniformly ...
Call no.

